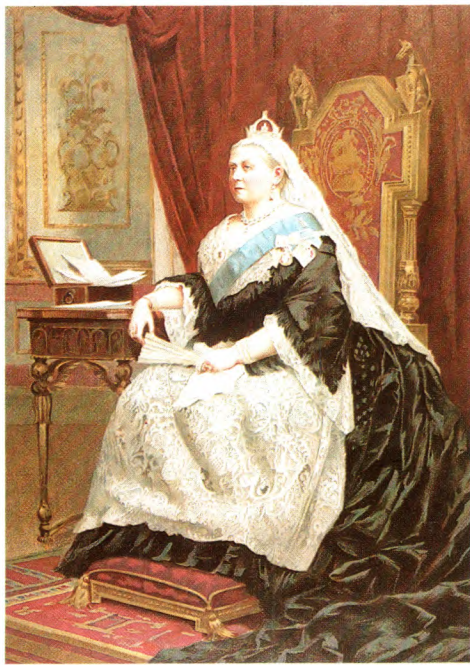


British Philatelic Bulletin

Volume 24

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1837

VICTORIAN BRITAIN

1887



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Editorial

DOUGLAS N MUIR

Stamp World London 90

As many readers will know, the next major international stamp exhibition to be held in Britain will be in 1990 at London's Alexandra Palace from 3 to 13 May. This will of course also encompass the 150th anniversary of the Penny Black on 6 May.

There will be some 3,000 frames of stamps on display at the exhibition and some 200 stands for dealers and postal administrations.

A pamphlet has now been sent out announcing that a prospectus will be available early in 1988 and asking those interested in details of the exhibition to write so that they can be sent when available. The address is: Stamp World London 90, British Philatelic Centre, 107 Charterhouse Street, LONDON EC1M 6PT.

Illustrated for the first time in the pamphlet is the logo of the exhibition as shown below.



Front Cover

The portraits of Queen Victoria on the front cover are illustrated courtesy of the Mary Evans Picture Library.

Victorian Britain

8 September 1987



Victoria, Queen of Great Britain, Ireland and British territories overseas came to the throne on 20 June 1837 and this year marks the 150th

As a young woman – lithograph of a miniature by W C Roth



anniversary of her accession. Born in 1819, she was the only child of George III's fourth son, Edward, Duke of Kent and of Victoria of Saxe-Coburg, sister of Leopold I, King of the Belgians, and she succeeded her uncle, William IV. A set of four stamps on 8 September will mark this and record some of the great achievements of what has become known as the Victorian age.

Queen Victoria reigned until 1901, becoming Empress of India in 1877. Her children married into nearly all the royal houses of Europe and this played an important part in international affairs in the 19th century. At home, it was a period of invention and industrialisation with *Coronation in Westminster Abbey*, by C R Leslie

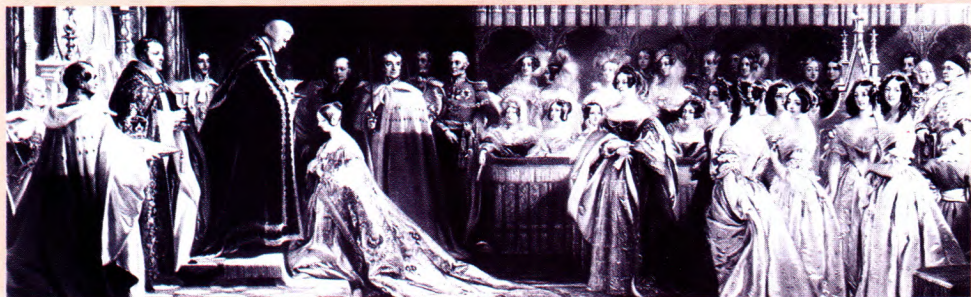
the growth of great cities at the expense of the countryside.

Great engineering works and advances in science and democracy are among the aspects depicted on the stamps. On each of the four stamps are three vignettes showing matters associated with Victoria's reign together with a portrait of the Queen. The vignettes are all printed recess, having been engraved by Czeslaw Slania, but the portrait of Victoria is in photogravure. Three of the portraits are taken



from paintings, but the last is from a photograph, the official photograph of her diamond jubilee celebrations of 1897.

On the 18p stamp Victoria is seen as a young woman, taken from a portrait, dating from 1842, by Franz Winterhalter (1806 –1873) a German painter famous for royal portraits. In



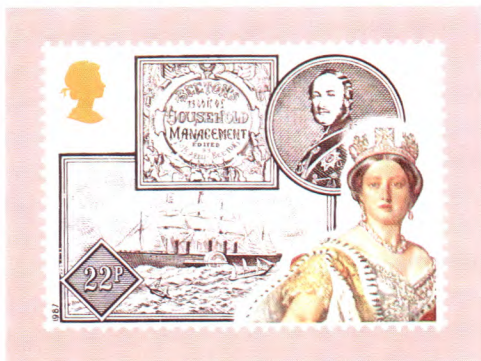


An early edition of Mrs Beeton's 'Book of Household Management'

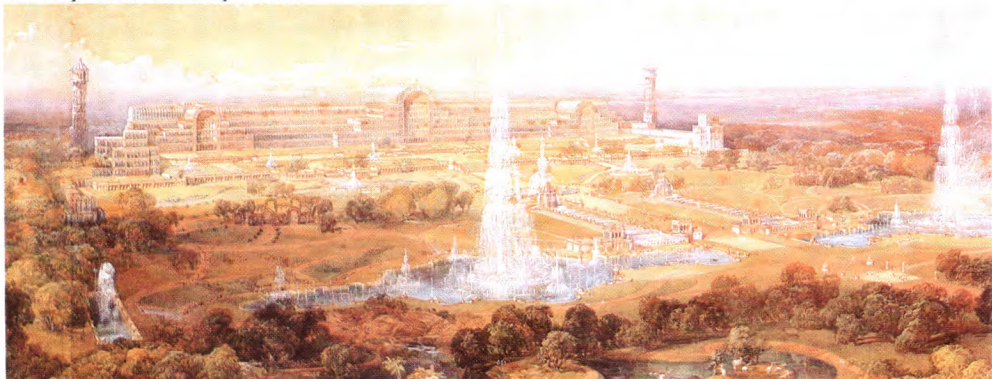
one of the vignettes can be seen Grace Darling rowing to rescue five survivors from the wreck of the passenger ship *Forfarshire*. In 1838 Grace with her father, the keeper of the Longstone lighthouse off Northumberland, toiled through raging seas in an exploit that was to capture the imagination of the public. Art was also rather romantic and a sentimental view of animals was fostered by Sir Edwin Landseer (1802 – 1873), a painter much favoured by Victoria. His *Monarch of the Glen*, also featured in detail on the stamp, was particularly admired. The final, and main, vignette is that of the Crystal Palace, originally built for the Great Exhibition in 1851. It was a huge temporary hall of cast-iron and glass which, after the exhibition was over, was transferred to Sydenham and re-opened in 1854, later to be destroyed by fire.

The Great Exhibition was largely the brain-child of Prince Albert, the Prince Consort and he is shown on the **22p** value. He was married to Victoria in 1840. Hard working and conscientious, Albert was born in 1819, the second son *The Crystal Palace at Sydenham*

of the Duke of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha and was Victoria's first cousin. He influenced Victoria greatly but died of typhoid fever in 1861. Also featured on the stamp is the cover of the *Book of Household Management* by Mrs Isabella Beeton which appeared in three parts in 1859–60. Married to a publisher, she had begun writing on cookery in his *Englishwoman's Domestic Magazine*. The last vignette on the stamp features the *Great Eastern* built by Isambard Kingdom Brunel. At 18,918 tons when she was launched in 1858 she was the largest ship in the world and the first to have a double iron hull. Although a failure as a passenger liner, she laid the first successful transatlantic cable making instant communications between Europe and America possible for the first time. Victoria's portrait dates from 1859, also by Franz Winterhalter.



On the **31p** stamp Victoria is shown in mourning for the loss of her consort. The death of Prince Albert in December 1861 had left Victoria devastated. She shut herself away as much as possible and always wore black. She took comfort from the many memorials to Albert and shown on the stamp is the Albert





Memorial in Kensington Gardens, the national tribute. It was designed by Sir George Gilbert Scott in the Gothic style current in 1864. In another vignette is a portrait of Benjamin Disraeli (later Earl of Beaconsfield), prime minister in 1868 and then from 1874 until 1880. He was on terms of affection with the Queen and was able to persuade her back into public life. In the international field he bought for Britain a controlling interest in the Suez Canal; at home he enacted legislation giving legal protection to trade unions. This was a period of electoral reform. Disraeli had already enfranchised some two million voters in 1867 but the mainly factory workers had voted him out of office. In 1872, the Ballot Act provided for the first time a secret ballot for all parliamentary and local elections and this is indicated pictorially on the stamp. The portrait of Victoria dates from 1875 and is by Heinrich von Angeli.

By 1887, when the Golden Jubilee of her reign occurred Victoria had returned to popular esteem. Celebrations were repeated in 1897 for the Diamond Jubilee and illustrated on the 34p



stamp is a celebratory motif from that year. The portrait of Victoria is in fact the official photograph taken for the celebrations, indicating the progress made in that field during her reign. Also depicted is a representation of the wireless telegraph developed by Guglielmo Marconi. In 1899 the first message was transmitted across the English Channel to France. The same year saw the outbreak of the Boer War viewed very differently in Britain and Europe. Two small British forces were besieged in Mafeking and Ladysmith and the relief of Mafeking on 17 May, 1900 was greeted with great celebration. The final vignette shows a newspaper boy announcing this.

Technical Details

The stamps were designed by Mike Dempsey FCSd, Carroll, Dempsey & Thirkell Limited.

Official photograph of Diamond Jubilee, 1897



They were printed in combined photogravure and intaglio on the Jumelle printing press by Harrison & Sons Limited, the vignettes in intaglio and the portraits of Victoria and the Queen's head in photogravure. The original engravings were by Czeslaw Slania. In format the stamps are horizontal, 41mm x 30mm, perf. 15 x 14, printed on unwatermarked phosphor-coated paper in sheets of 100 on PVA Dextrin gum.

PHQ Cards

PHQ cards (Nos. 104 A-D) featuring each of the four stamps will be available from 25 August, price 15p each.

Presentation Pack

The presentation pack will cost £1.27 and was designed by Carroll, Dempsey & Thirkell Limited with text by Theodore Rowland-Entwistle.



Mrs J Robinson
200 Manorbier Road
ILKESTON
Derbyshire
DE7 4AB



Pictures were supplied by The British Architectural Library, RIBA, London, The Bridgeman Art Library, BBC Hulton Picture Library, and the Mary Evans Picture Library. Lettering was by George Hoye. On the reverse of the pack appears one of the stamps of the 1986 Medieval Life set, as a related thematic issue.

First Day Cover

The first day cover features the lettering as on the pack and was designed by George Hoye. It costs 16p each. Two pictorial postmarks will be used for the Bureau first day cover service, one from the British Philatelic Bureau featuring the Orb; the other is from Newport, Isle of Wight, and features Osborne House.

A first day cover service will be provided by the Bureau with the official Royal Mail cover addressed to the destination required with the

four stamps cancelled with either postmark. The charges will be £1.51 (inland) and £1.32 (overseas). Application forms, available from the Bureau and at Head Post Offices, should be returned not later than 8 September.

Customers requiring only the special pictorial postmarks may obtain them under the reposting facility by sending on the first day of issue a stamped addressed envelope under an outer cover endorsed 'Special First Day of Issue Handstamp' to:

'British Philatelic Bureau' 20 Brandon Street,
EDINBURGH EH3 5TT

'Newport' Special Postmark Duty
Letter District Office
Slindon Street
PORTSMOUTH PO1 1AA

National Postal Museum Postcards

On 8 September 1987 the National Postal Museum will issue a set of three postcards featuring pillar boxes of the Victorian era to coincide with the issue of stamps for Victorian Britain.

87/7 Pillar box designed by Richard Redgrave of the Department of Science and Art, cast by Smith and Hawkes for use in London, Edinburgh, Dublin and other large cities, during the period 1857 to 1859.

87/8 Pillar box cast by Suttie and Company of Greenock for use in Scotland during the period 1856-1857.

87/9 Pillar box designed by the architect J W Penfold, cast by Cochrane, Grove and Company from 1866 to 1879. This example dates from c.1872.

Examples of the original boxes upon which cards 87/7 and 8 are based are illustrated.



The cards will be available from the Museum shop priced 20p each; sets of three will be available by mail order form the Museum, priced 60p per set plus 18p handling charge. For mail orders in excess of £18 a handling charge of £1.38p will apply (these orders will be despatched by registered mail). Orders to the National Postal Museum, King Edward Building, King Edward St., LONDON EC1A 1LP.

There will be a special handstamp, in addition to the normal Maltese Cross handstamp, for one month from 8 September.

NPM Postcards – Special Offer

To coincide with the issue of the Victorian Britain stamps on 8 September (and for the day of issue only) the National Postal Museum will offer a set of seven Museum cards on the Victorian theme at the special price of £1 (plus 18p handling charge for mail orders).

The cards in the set are:

BPE card featuring the Heinrich Von Angeli portrait of Queen Victoria

NPM card 87/1 2d 1887 "Jubilee" issue

87/2 10d 1887 "Jubilee" issue

87/3 1s 1887 "Jubilee" issue

87/7 Science and Art pillar box 1857-9

87/8 Suttie pillar box 1856-7

87/9 Penfold pillar box c.1872

Pre-release facilities for those wishing to obtain the 8 September handstamp will be available under the usual conditions from 1 September.

Machin Exhibition at the NPM

To commemorate the 20th anniversary of the introduction of the Machin definitive design, an exhibition will be opened at the National Postal Museum on 8 September. Featured will be items from the development of the design in the mid 1960s, in particular a series of plaster casts recently transferred to the National Postal Museum and the essays prepared from them. This will be the first time that these casts have gone on public display.

The exhibition, which will continue until the end of 1987, will also mark the 21st anniversary of the opening of the Museum. It can be viewed during normal Museum opening hours: 9.30am to 4.30pm Monday to Thursday, and 9.30am to 4.00pm Fridays.

Experimental Stamp Vending Machines

May 1987

L F NEWBERRY

Experimental, electronically-operated stamp vending machines which give change have been installed inside six selected main post offices. The machines are coloured magnolia and were made by Messrs Hilday of Attleborough, Norfolk.

There are two types. The first, accepting all coins up to 50p, were installed at Cardiff, Edgbaston and Kettering and went into service at the beginning of May. In the second type £1 coins are also accepted and these were installed later in the month at Grimsby, Newark and Winchester. At the last office the machine went into operation on 15 May. Both types issued first and second class definitives from standard rolls – KL (500 x 13p) and NL (500 x 18p) longways rolls.

As each coin is inserted the amount of credit is registered on an illuminated digital indicator. When this covers the amount of the stamps required the customer presses the 13p or 18p buttons for the stamps. Change is given by pressing the reject/change button.

Generally, change is self-funding unless, of course, there is a procession of customers all inserting large value coins and needing maximum change. When unable to give change, a warning light goes on and the machine then only operates on exact money. For a test period of six months the machines have been installed inside post offices, away from the counter, to relieve the counter pressure and so cut down customer waiting time.

Stamps were printed on the Chambon press from cylinders used to print stamps contained in the £1.30 and £1.80 counter stamp books.

13p KL lengthways reeled 500 x 13p with centre phosphor band initially printed from colour cylinder B7, phosphor cylinder B62

18p NL lengthways reeled 500 x 18p phosphor coated paper (PCP) initially printed from cylinder B2

After printing on the Chambon press the reel is transferred to another machine where the



combined coil leaders and inners are inserted at every 500th row and rewound into work rolls of 10 sets. The combined coil leader is 13 inches long by 8 inches wide and numbered in groups of 10, each bearing the stock letter, content and price of the roll.

Work rolls are transferred to yet another machine for slitting and reeling into individual rolls. The first leader is torn off as waste and the remaining inner inserted to form the core. The web is then reeled and slit until the next leader is reached when it is cut to separate it from the inner. The leaders are secured by pasting the end back on to itself, tied with red tape and sealed with wax.

'K' Type Stamp Book Vending Machine

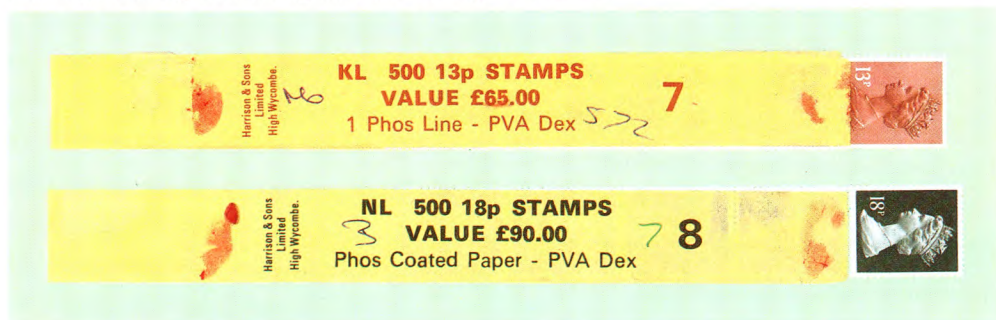
Following the successful trial in the Brighton area of the 'K' booklet vending machines, work is now proceeding in installing this dual vending

machine outside all the 1,500 Crown offices. Those installed up to 14 May are listed below.

- 10 Dane St, Bedford
- 11 Ashfield Precinct, Kirkby in Ashfield
- 13 Brook St, Sutton in Ashfield
- 15 Queen St, Nottingham
- 16 Fleming Way, Swindon
- 17 Warren St, Tenby
- 18 Fleet St, London EC4Y 9EB
- 19 Windsor & Eton Railway Station
- 20 Lombard St, London EC3 9EB
- 21 Broadway, London SW1H 0AX
- 22 Baker St, London W1M 1FE
- 23 Broadway, Wood Green, London N22 6DZ

The installation of the K machine at Lewes, Sussex, due in July is still delayed.

Two of the coil leaders taken from the rolls used in the machines.



New Parcel Stamp

A new £1.60 stamp will be issued on 15 September to meet the new basic parcel rate for 1 kg. The colour will be a buff Queen's head against a blue/green background. The stamps will be printed by Harrison & Sons Limited in photogravure, without phosphor, in sheets of 100 and will measure approximately 30mm x 41mm.

Presentation Pack

A new high value presentation pack containing the £1.60 stamp will also go on sale, price £1.82.

First Day Covers

First day covers depicting heraldic symbols and with the wording "New Definitive Stamps" will cost 16p each. Two pictorial postmarks will be used or the Bureau first day cover service, one from the British Philatelic Bureau, the other from Windsor, Berks.

A first day cover service will be provided by the Bureau with the official Royal Mail cover addressed to the destination required with the stamp cancelled with either postmark. The charges will be £2.15 (inland), £1.87 (overseas). Application forms, available from the Bureau and at Head Post Offices, should be returned not later than 15 September.

Customers requiring only the special pictorial postmarks may obtain them under the reposting facility by sending on the first day of issue a stamped addressed envelope under an outer cover endorsed 'Special First Day of Issue Handstamp' to:

'British Philatelic Bureau'	20 Brandon Street, EDINBURGH EH3 5TT
'Windsor'	Special Handstamp Duty, Windsor BO 38 Peascod Street, WINDSOR Berks SL4 1AA

The First British Sorting Machines

Modern Postal History: No.3

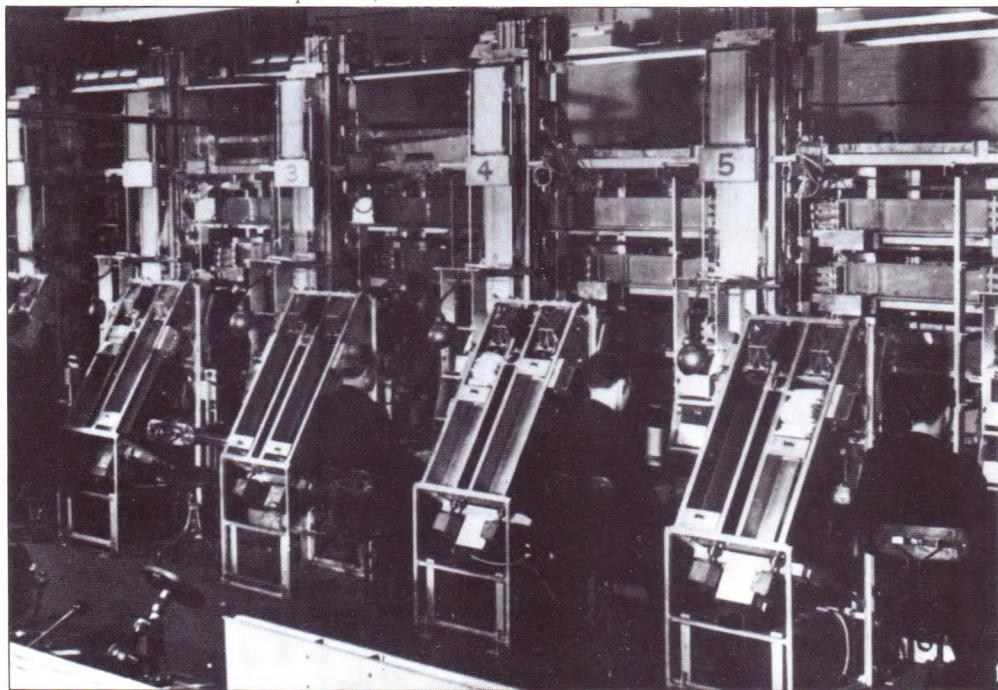
DOUGLAS N MUIR

The first two parts of this series (*Bulletin* January and February 1985) dealt with the Dutch Transorma letter sorting machine introduced at Brighton in 1935, and the resulting postal history items. Those two machines lasted until 1968 but they did not represent the forward to complete postal mechanisation. This began in Britain with machines developed after World War II and the first types are the subject of this article.

After the introduction of the Dutch Transorma the British Post Office was stimulated into greater research itself to produce a home-grown machine. World War II interrupted this research but preliminary proposals had been made for the ideal sorting machine. In 1945 these were revived and it was decided to go ahead with a plan for a completely automatic machine, *de novo*, using fluorescent or other markings in a code on the letter. This was fundamentally different *The 'Interim' machine with six positions, c.1954*

from anything that had gone before and it was recognised that development would take several years – a very long term project. It was therefore decided to go ahead with what was known as the “Interim” Letter Sorting Machine having six operators’ positions and some 120 selections, or boxes to which letters could be sorted. Work on this machine, and its offspring the SPLSM (Single Position Letter Sorting machine or “Elsie”), was to continue for the next decade, and together the machines represent the first reasonably successful British sorting machines.

Development work on the “Interim” machine was carried out initially by the Post Office Engineering Department’s research laboratory set up in the Mount Pleasant sorting office in London. Construction of the final machine was left to an outside contractor, Hall Telephone Accessories Ltd, who had already produced stamp vending machines for the postal



selection box. Much difficulty was experienced with the accuracy of the shooting and the machine was eventually dismantled to make way for the more successful single position model. The great advance on the Transorma was that there was no set rhythm at which the operator had to work. He could go at his own pace.

A recently discovered file gives some details of the training of operators which began in July 1950 on dummy keyboards. Some of the codes which they had to memorise are also listed and they seem quite familiar to us today, influenced as we are by the use of later postcodes. For example, CF stood for Cardiff, LU for Luton, PR for Preston and SR for Surrey. Others were less obvious: QQ was London WC, WS Bath rural and SS Devon. The fingering is indicated by the illustration which, together with the other illustrations, is at present on show in the National Postal Museum.

Until 1980, it was not known that the tests on live mail had left any mark on the envelopes sorted. Then one example, and subsequently a few more, were discovered which showed that identes were used to distinguish the six positions. The identes were the Roman numerals I to VI, printed in red at regularly spaced intervals half way down the envelope. All the different identes have now been found except the ident III. Mount Pleasant sorts mail from London EC *Southampton, 1957 with a SPLSM in the foreground, the early ALF on the right, and the segregator in the background.*

going out of London and also mail coming into London from abroad and it is these categories of mail which are most likely to be found in the period with these rare identes. The example illustrated shows the ident V and is on incoming mail of April 1952 from The Hague, in Holland. The earliest known identes are from this period and the latest are from January 1955. It will probably never be known precisely how many tests were carried out because the official files were destroyed some years ago. However, as near as can be established at the present time the first tests were on or about 20 April 1952.

This test machine was dismantled when a better alternative was found. The prototype SPLSM, an advanced single position machine based on the "Interim" machine, was installed at the Bath sorting office in October 1955 for field trials. Like the "Interim" machine, the operator sat at a keyboard and keyed a memorised code. This code was translated electronically so that the letter was carried to the appropriate box out of 120 selections. Later, the number of selections was increased to 133, as in the machine illustrated at the Rome international postal mechanisation exhibition in 1956. Subsequently, 20 production models were ordered with 144 selections. Some 34 were also installed in post offices abroad, including two in Leningrad and 10 in Madrid.

Operators on SPLSMs also had identes but





Bayan Hanife Pemra
Boğaz içi No 19
Gazi Mağusa
Hesin 10
Turkey



Examples of idents from the London F S SPLSM with the 1977 missort on the left and a late example of the large idents on the right.

these seem to have been used only rarely. These idents identified the operators rather than the machines and were thus similar to idents from the Transorma (those on the "Interim" machine identified the position rather than the operator). The offices which had the machines were Norwich (1956-70), Belfast (1960-3), Birmingham (1960-5), Cardiff (1959-64), Edinburgh (1960-4), Leeds (1959-64), Liverpool 1959-64 London SEDO (1958-60), Luton (1958-9) and Southampton (1960-4), though these dates are only to indicate the range wherein idents have been recorded. The machines in fact were often installed before this and were not removed until later. Idents in red or black are known from most of these offices but they are scarce. Later, machines were transferred to Crewe, Preston, Ipswich and Reading and remained in use until the 1980s, though idents are not known.

An improved version of the SPLSM, of a type convertible into a sorting machine alone, was installed in the London Foreign Section office in 1971. These five machines are still in use today, though they are likely to be dismantled shortly. Until recently, there was a UPU agreement which prevented any fluorescent or phosphorescent markings being placed on international mails. Thus, SPLSMs were useful to sort international mails. The London FS machines used idents (A to E) on the right hand side of the envelope at regularly spaced intervals so that often you find two on the same letter. The letters are printed in red but they appear

only rarely. Mainly, they were found from February 1977 to 1979 and then more recently from 1983 to September 1984. The first example illustrated shows a missort where the item has been through the machine twice. This was because it was not noticed that it was addressed to Famagusta in the Turkish part of Cyprus. Later idents were very much larger, though the same letters were still used.

Last year, the keyboards were removed to be replaced with those from the third generation of coding desks which are due to be installed shortly.

The Potter's Craft – Competition

Members of the Stamp Bug Club can take part in a stamp design competition arranged with The Crafts Council, celebrating the issue of the Studio Pottery stamps on 13 October, and the opening of the 1987 Chelsea Crafts Fair the day before. Open to members under 18 the competition is to design a stamp or stamps on the theme of The Potter's Craft. Details of the Stamp Bug Club together with competition details are available from The Stamp Bug Club, Countrywide House, West Bar, BANBURY, Oxon OX16 9SH.

Postal Order Charges

Charges given for postal orders (July *Bulletin*, page 247) were incorrect. They should have read 22p up to £1, 36p up to £10 and 55p for the new £20.

Philatelic Terms Explained

KENNETH F CHAPMAN

No.15: Proofs

Because proofs and essays are frequently linked as one philatelic subject (hence the Essay-Proof Society in the United States) and grouped together in auctions, it is important to distinguish between them. An essay never finishes up as an issued design, however small the design difference between the two (see *July Bulletin*, page 254).

On the other hand, proofs are impressions taken by a die or a plate, either at stages during the engraving of the die or the laying down of a plate; or, at the final stage of the die and, in the case of a plate, just before the order to print is given, following close inspection of a proof sheet. The essential point is that proofs are of designs, or parts of designs, that are ultimately issued as stamps.

Proofs themselves fall into one of several classifications as indicated below:

Progress Proofs. These are printed impressions pulled at intervals during the engraving of a die (either recess or letterpress) in order that the engraver can compare the image with the artwork on which he is basing his engraving.

Die Proof. This is an impression of the completed die. If the die proof is in the colour (or colours) selected for public use, then it is called a *Colour Proof*. However, this stage is often preceded by proofs pulled in other colours, not actually used for the issued stamp but made available so that a final choice can be made. This style of proof is called a *Colour Trial*.

A completed die proof in the issued colour, always imperforate, can normally be identified through its being printed on soft India paper (which gives a particularly clear impression) and mounted on countersunk cards to prevent the surface being rubbed. It should be remembered that die proofs can only exist as units of one.

Plate Proof. Once a master die has been approved it is then used to lay down as many impressions on a printing plate as are needed for producing a complete sheet of stamps. Plate proofs are normally pulled imperforate in sheet form but may be subsequently cut into convenient blocks

(such as four or nine) when they are still distinguishable from the single-stamp die proofs.

Photogravure and lithographic proofs. The above remarks apply specifically to stamps printed in recess (line-engraving) or surface printing (letterpress). Proofs of stamps printed in photogravure or by photo-lithography are somewhat different. The original artwork is normally produced six times linear (ie enlarged by 6 over the required print size). This is then reduced by photography down to stamp size with colour separation negatives as required. From these, small trial printing plates or cylinders are prepared in order to pull proofs of the design reduced to stamp size. Once these are approved for design, colour and registration, a step-and-repeat camera automatically prepares a negative for a full sheet of 100, 200 or any other stipulated quantity of stamps. The final stage is the production of complete imperforate proof sheets (known as *imprimaturs*) which are examined minutely for any small flaws before the order to go to press is given.



Die proof of the head of Queen Victoria, courtesy of R M Phillips Collection

Proofs are keenly sought after by specialist collectors. Today, responsible stamp-issuing authorities see that they do not reach the market but sales of several 19th century archives have made moderate quantities available to collectors.

Stock Books

Contrary to the notice which appeared in the *July Bulletin* the stock books will be available as follows: the large-sized book (£19.75) from Philatelic Counters and the Philatelic Bureau; the small-sized book (£6.75) from the Philatelic Bureau only. They go on sale from 3 August.

Famous Authoresses, 1980

British Special Issues: No.138

FRANCIS KENNEDY

It was ironic that this issue, dedicated to "Famous Authoresses" should feature two women who first wrote under masculine pseudonyms and one who persisted in doing likewise all her writing life. Released on 9 July 1980, the issue represented Great Britain's participation in the Famous People EUROPA theme for 1980; but as that year was also the halfway mark in the Decade of Women promulgated by the United Nations, the Post Office decided to

feature the four women writers whose portraits appear on the stamps.

Another surely unique feature of the issue is that two of the women involved were sisters. They chose at first to write as Currer and Ellis Bell, in the hope that their work would be better received by the public, then somewhat suspicious of women writers. That same public subsequently came to know the "Bells" as Charlotte and Emily Brontë, leaders among women novelists of all time!

The third of the four women never used her own name professionally. She evidently thought that "George Elliot" was more imposing than "Mary Anne Evans", the name on her birth certificate. The fourth woman was unusual, too, in that she wrote as Mrs Gaskell, rather than as Elizabeth Gaskell.

The EUROPA aspect of the issue was acknowledged by the inclusion of the CEPT symbol of the Conference of European Posts and Telecommunications on the 12p and 13½p stamps, respectively covering the inland and European basic letter rates.

The designer was Barbara Brown (designer of the Jane Austen commemoratives of 1975), a specialist in miniatures who submitted the final artwork in stamp size, a method calling for immense precision of brushwork. Each portrait was set against a scene from the works of the authoress concerned: 12p, Charlotte Brontë, scene from *Jane Eyre*; 13½p, George Eliot, *The Mill on the Floss*; 15p, Emily Brontë, *Wuthering Heights* and 17½p, Mrs Gaskell, *North and South*. All four were born between 1810 and 1819 and their novels reflect either the rural or industrial life of their times and have become classics of English literature.

The stamps were printed by Harrison & Sons Ltd. in sheets of 100 (two panes of 10 x 5). Prominent constant varieties include: 12p, missing "p" in "12p" and broken "e" in "Eyre"; 13½p, retouch on sleeve at left; 15p, flaw in eyebrow.

Sales on withdrawal of the issue (8 July 1981) were: 12p, 46,296,000; 13½p, 11,274,000; 15p, 10,998,000 and 17½p, 10,649,000.



"Window" Stamp Books

4 August 1987

L F NEWBERY

A range of 10 stamp books on sale from 4 August makes history with the latest innovations – a window on the front cover and bar-coded on the back cover. All 10 will be on sale at philatelic counters and a trial at selected offices will follow.

The folded books with red laminated covers are similar in design having a stamp size window in the top right corner through which a stamp is visible, suggesting a stamp on an envelope. At the foot is the legend "Royal Mail" in yellow. The remaining space is taken up with the taken up with the book content.

The bar code in black is centrally placed on the reverse with the legend Royal Mail above. Also on the lower right corner is the book reference letter: A or B on the 72p, C or D on the £1.80, E or F on the 52p, G or H on the £1.30 and I or J on the £1.04 books. Books with A, C, E, G or I are bundled in 50s and B, D, F, H and J books are bundled in 25s. The bar codes were given in last month's *Bulletin*, (page 248).

Books of four stamps

The inside front cover has an abridged panel of postal rates for UK letters and cards, Europe letters and cards, Worldwide postcards with the notice "Rates above effective from 20 October 1986". At the foot of the inside back cover is the imprint – Printed by Harrison & Sons Ltd.

Books of 10 stamps

At the foot of the inside front cover is the imprint and the abridged rates panel with the addition of Overseas air letters is placed on the inside back cover.

Cover Printing

The covers were printed in litho on the sheet-fed Roland press in columns of 10. There were three layouts: one for books with panes of 10 stamps and two for books with panes of 4 stamps. The layout for the books of 10 had two columns, one for first class books and one for second class books. One of the layouts for panes of 4 had two columns devoted to first class books and one column for second class books. The layout for the panes of 4 with 26p stamps had all three columns the same. Further, each column was in two formats each containing three covers to be bundled in 50s and two to be bundled in 25s.

A	A	E	C	G	I	I	I
A	A	E	C	G	I	I	I
A	A	E	C	F	I	I	I
B	B	F	D	H	J	J	J
B	B	F	D	H	J	J	J
A	A	E	C	G	I	I	I
A	A	E	C	G	I	I	I
A	A	E	C	G	I	I	I
B	B	F	D	H	J	J	J
B	B	F	D	H	J	J	J

Covers of two of the books as issued





Reverse with bar code and a pane of stamps, as issued

After printing, the sheets were laminated with a plastic film. A crease was pressed to form a hinge and a cut made in the back cover to form a catch, securing the tucked-in front cover as in some book matches. Before making up into books the sheets were cut into half column strips of five and folded.

The stamps were printed and perforated on the Chambon press. The layout of the sheet (two columns of five for the panes of 10 and four columns of five for the panes of four) was unusual in that a gutter was between each pane giving the panes in the issued books a margin on all sides. The gutter, approximately one half stamp wide (seven perforation holes) was perforated across every row. The centre pin was omitted leaving three holes on either side. The purpose of the central blank was to have clean

edges in the finished books, the cut being in the centre of the gutter. The cylinder numbers (listed last month) were opposite the top row of the second pane and were in the left selvedge and vertical gutters.

With each strike of the perforator a whole row of booklet panes and gutter was perforated. There was a single extension hole opposite every row in the selvedge and vertical gutters.

Before making up into books the printed and perforated web was slit into columns of five book panes. Those with panes of four stamps were ready to be stuck into the covers whilst those for the panes of 10 pass through a folding machine giving a crease between the first and second stamps. The columns were pasted in by hand, those with panes of four on the back cover and those with panes of 10 on the front cover.

Trials (unissued) of a book with a different type of catch



After cutting into single books they were bundled into their respective bundles of 50 or 25. The text on the first class bundle bands was in red, on the second class in green, and on the Worldwide booklets in black as:

50
STAMP
BOOKLETS
R.S.P. £0.72p
TYPE
A

25
£0.72p STAMP
BOOKLETS
TYPE B

The books after bundling were packed in boxes of 1,000 and labelled with a white self-adhesive label having a printed computer type letter made up of a number of smaller type of the same letter.

T P O Publicity Card

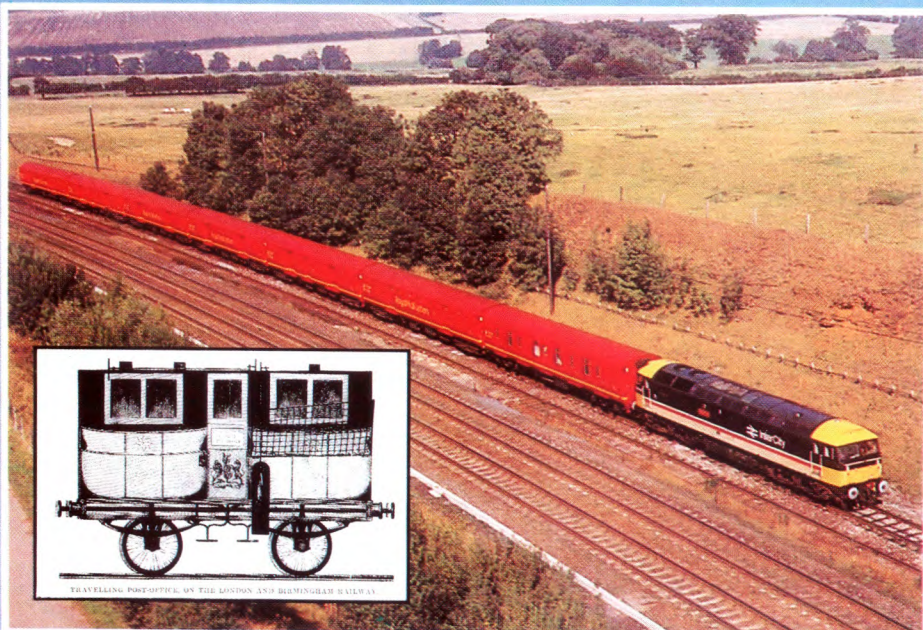
In May 1987 a publicity card was produced on behalf of the PR Unit, London & South East featuring the new livery designed for the Travelling Post Offices in 1986. The card shows a view of a T P O in the new livery with an inset drawing of the very first T P O carriage on the London and Birmingham Railway in 1838.

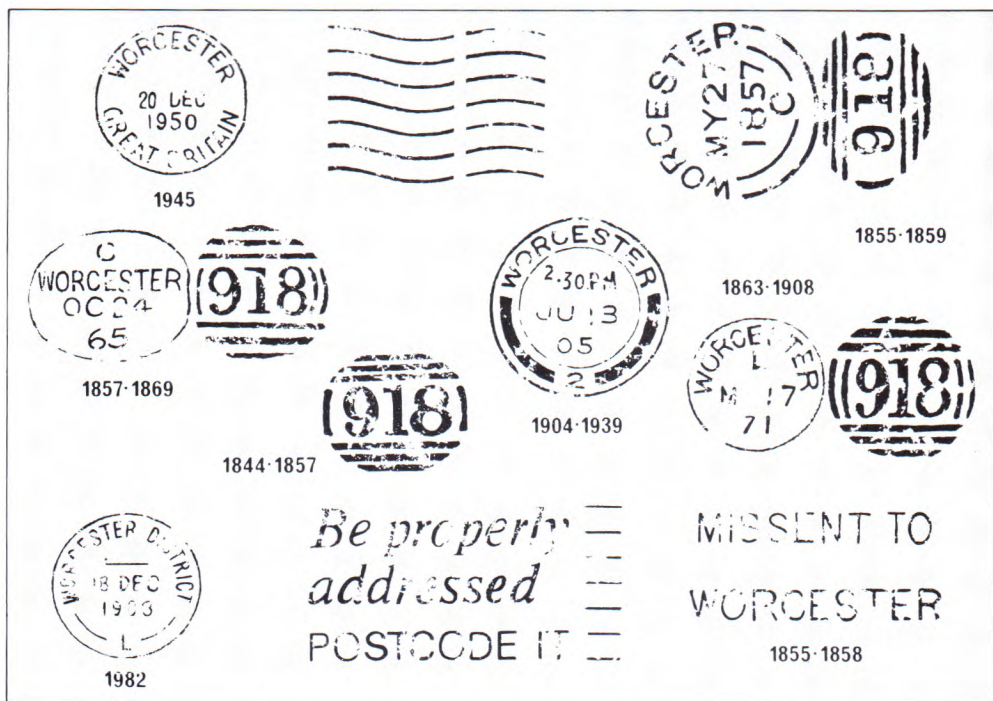
This card has now been put on sale at the National Postal Museum at 14p each to visitors only.

Exhibition Card Venues

The exhibition card which was put on sale at all philatelic counters and at Capex on 13 June will now be made available at the British Post Office stand at the following exhibitions each with its own special cachet:

Exhibition	Country	Date
Riccione	Italy	22-4 August 1987
Balpe	Baltimore, USA	5-7 September 1987
Stampex/BPE	London, GB	22-7 Sept 1987
Philex	Toronto, Canada	2-4 October 1987
Le Havre a l'heure anglaise	Le Havre, France	10-11 October 1987
Hafnia '87	Copenhagen Denmark	16-25 October 1987
ASDA	New York, USA	22-25 October 1987
Philatelia 87	Cologne W Germany	6-8 November 1987
Messen	Oslo, Norway	November 1987
Milano	Milan, Italy	20-22 November
Japex	Tokyo, Japan	21-23 November
Philex	Toronto, Canada	8-10 January 1988
Orco-Expo	Los Angeles, USA	8-10 January 1988
Spring Stampex	London, GB	1-6 March 1988
Interpex	New York, USA	16-20 March 1988
Essen 88	Essen, W Germany	14-17 April 1988
Finlandia 88	Helsinki, Finland	1-12 June, 1988





New Worcester Card

A picture card is to be issued by Worcester Head Post Office on 8 September, the date of issue of the Victorian Britain stamps. The card features Worcester postmarks from 1844 to 1983. This complements an earlier card issued in October 1985 which illustrated Worcester postmarks from 1720 to 1844. These examples come from the collection of Mike Young, President of the Worcester Philatelic Society.

The price of a mint card is 15p or 50p serviced with a Maltese Cross first day of issue handstamp cancelling the 18p Victorian Britain stamp. A special posting box will be sited at the Worcester Philatelic Counter.

Normal reposting facilities are via the Head Postmaster, Worcester Post Office, 8/10 Foregate Street, WORCESTER WR1 1AA.

Scottish Congress

For many years the Annual Congress of the Association of Scottish Philatelic Societies has been held in the University of Stirling. As this is no longer possible the 1988 Annual Congress will be in Falkirk Town Hall on Saturday, 30 April with a Collectors' Day on Sunday 1 May.

August Digest

Issued in August

- 3 August **Stockbooks** in two sizes: 16pp £6.25 (only from Bureau); 64pp £19.75
- 4 August **"Window" stamp books:**
 - £1.80 (10 x 18p) x 2 types
 - £1.30 (10 x 13p) x 2 types
 - £1.04 (4 x 26p) x 2 types
 - 72p (4 x 18p) x 2 types
 - 52p (4 x 13p) x 2 types
- 4 August **printing** (of stamps) – Harrisons, photogravure, on the Chambon press, each pane with selvages
- 4 August **J M Barrie Scottish pictorial aerogramme**, 30p, printed by McCorquodales
- 25 August **Victorian Britain PHQ cards** (Nos 104A-D) 15p each

Withdrawn in August

- 4 August **August 1986 Scottish aerogramme**
- 11 August **August 1986 stamp books**
- 18 August **Commonwealth Parliamentary Association Conference** all items

Post Office Wins BBC Design Award

In a BBC design competition judged by the public Royal Mail Stamps won the Graphics section and came second in the overall count.

The competition was divided into three sections: Products (such as bathroom furniture, cement mixer); Environmental (architecture, civil engineering); and Graphics.

In the Graphics section there were about 500 entries, shortlisted by judges to five:

The *Independent* newspaper
Boots packaging

Blueprint – a design magazine
TV commercial for Burroughs computers
Royal Mail Stamps

Three stamp issues were selected: Keith Bassford's **British Films**; Ralph Steadman's **Halley's Comet**; and Alfred Lammer's **Flowers**.

The television programmes gave some of the background to the designing of the stamps and showed the work involved from idea to finished product.

Viewers were invited to judge by completing a coupon in the Radio Times or a form available at various regional exhibitions.

Royal Mail stamps were chosen as winners in the Graphics section and the care taken in producing the stamps was particularly commented on in discussion.



Letters to the Editor



Errors

Sir,

I have just read the July edition of the *British Philatelic Bulletin* and have noted with some embarrassment that, unfortunately, when I wrote to you giving details of our anniversary cancellation I inadvertently quoted David Gentleman as the designer. This, I am afraid, is incorrect; it was, in fact, designed by Clive Abbott.

I hope this can now be corrected and that I have caused no inconvenience, or misled your readers.

JAMES SKINNER, Director, B Alan Ltd

"Window Books"

Sir,

I object strongly to the instruction which is reported in David Dale's article (July *Bulletin*) as having been given to philatelic counters to sell the new Window Books unopened. He states that this is because the selvages will mean that perforation quality will no longer be a problem, but, of course, it will be, as bad perforation will still result in badly centred stamps, as before.

It is greatly to be hoped that this instruction will be withdrawn so that intending purchasers can examine the quality of the goods before buying them, especially as most people buying from philatelic counters are those for whom that quality is vital, as is not the case with those buying stamps from other post office counters.

MARTIN R DAVIES, Leigh Woods, Bristol

As the books are closed by a tab handling will cause wear and tear. For this reason we are offering books of uniform quality from ordinary counters, philatelic counters and the Bureau.

David Dale

Holmes and Poe

Sir,

As a life-long enthusiast for the Sherlock Holmes stories, it was a great delight to read Guy Averill's article in the June *Bulletin*.

If Mr Averill were as familiar with American detective fiction as he obviously is with British, he would be aware of the works of Edgar Allen

Poe. In the short story *The Gold Bug*, Poe writes at some length on the decipherment of a coded message. Now, Poe died in 1849, but Holmes did not appear until 1887. Thus, sadly for us both, our hero was not the first to unravel a coding system in a short story, his American cousins beat him to it by at least 38 years!

F W SHAKESPEARE, St Annes on Sea, Lancs

Regional Postcards

Sir,

I wish to bring to your attention the fact that I now find it impossible to collect first day of issue regional postcards. At one time I enjoyed writing off to the various regions for these cards, but found it difficult at times due to lack of advance notice.

I see that, following the postal reorganisation, we are going back to the bad old days. I have just received my July copy of your excellent magazine, which I enjoy reading, only to find that the Scottish Post Office Board issued their set of cards on 19 June. I cannot remember seeing any mention of this issue in the June *Bulletin*.

If you wish to keep and make new customers, then surely giving advance notice of issue of cards etc should be a priority?

Thanking you for an otherwise informative magazine.

DAVID BROADBENT, Manchester

In the *Bulletin* we always try to give as much advance information as possible on any new issues, but in the particular case referred to this was not possible. There were, however, no special first day of issue facilities provided in Scotland. Any inconvenience to collectors is regretted and we shall continue to endeavour to make certain that such lapses do not recur. Ed.

The Price of Philately

Sir,

I am frequently reminded of the time in 1972 when I first applied to the Bureau for a regular order. At that time I was living in Hull, and well remember the phone call I had from Edinburgh (the first of several since) being most helpful to a very "new" late-coming collector. My interest had been sparked by a group of 10 year old children with the Stamp Club they had in one of their break-times, when I was a teacher. I think my initial order was for fdc's, new issues and the *Bulletin*.

The most memorable part of that first con-

versation was, in a Scottish voice, "About £5 a year will cover it".

As your June correspondent points out, it is very much more expensive now and since I became a pensioner it is one of the few outgoings that I maintain, even though my standing order has developed somewhat!

My collection of British stamps is now solely of current issues. Gone are the days of "dealings" for the more expensive older ones and "errors", but I do have one good Penny Black and not a bad collection before I had to cease buying.

Despite fluctuations in market prices, I still look on my (considerable) collection, now kept in drawers in a disgracefully unsorted state because I can no longer afford the stationery to add to my British albums, as a worthwhile legacy at my demise, though I don't envy whoever has to sort and value them! The sorting alone, left for too long, defeats me ...

Mrs SYBIL SAREL, Stromness, Orkney (a satisfied if impoverished customer)

Railways Error

Sir,

In the article concerning British Special Issues about the 150th Anniversary of the Liverpool and Manchester Railway, 1980 which was contained in the May issue of the *Bulletin*. It states that of the two errors worthy of catalogue status one is that the central mounting step of the third class carriage is filled with grey dots. Unfortunately, you have the wrong carriage. The carriage with the error is in fact the rail truck.

SGT JOHN L SMITH, BFPO 6

Sir,

Since David Gentleman's train commemorates the opening of the Liverpool and Manchester Railway, should it not be facing the opposite way? The train, I believe, travelled from Liverpool to Manchester – west to east. he has it going from east to west! It is in imminent danger of dropping into the River Mersey.

FRANCIS BARR, Harare, Zimbabwe

"Postcode Delivery"

Sir,

May I offer my congratulations to The Post Office for so promptly delivering a letter from Woburn, Mass, USA, posted by air mail on 1 June and delivered to an American staying with me, by first post on 4 June.

The "Postcode" written on the envelope, instead of the correct PE3 6EB had been written after Peterborough as "Pezgeb".

No wonder we have Sherlock Holmes on the front of our 50p booklets!

GEORGE DIXON, Peterborough

New Cylinders and Plates

Recent printings of national and country definitives have taken place from the following cylinders and plates:

By Harrison's

50p National cylinder 28

By Questa

5p National plates Q19/Q20

13p Wales plates Q3Q3/Q4Q4

Commemorative Cover

Docklands Light Railway. On 30 July the Queen opened the Docklands Light Railway in London. Marking this event a cover bearing an 18p definitive cancelled by a special handstamp is available at £2.35 from J & M Arlington Ltd, 45 Lakenheath, LONDON N14 4RL.

British Philatelic Bulletin

Editor Douglas N. Muir

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